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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 814 By Burchett

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate John M. Wood for ten years of meritorious service at the Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the elected representatives of the state of Tennessee should pause to pay tribute to those exemplary citizens who have given unselfishly of themselves, their time and their talents to perpetuate the public good and who are celebrating milestones in their venerable lives; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee General Assembly is proud to specially recognize citizens of our state who, unheralded, work hard, perform their duties with extraordinary dedication and diligence, and are exemplary servants to God and the people; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend John M. Wood is one such remarkable person, as a voice of integrity in the Knoxville community and in the Presbyterian Church in America denomination; and

WHEREAS, John Wood came to Tennessee ten years ago to serve the people of the Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church, where he still serves today as the senior pastor; and

WHEREAS, Brother Wood and the members of the Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church are celebrating ten years together by commemorating this momentous event with great joy, remembering the past, giving thanks for the present, and eagerly anticipating the future; and

WHEREAS, John Wood attributes the joy and the success that he has found in his work at Cedar Springs and in the greater Knoxville community to his love for and faith in God, his stalwart commitment to living each day by Christian principles, and to the support, similar love, faith, and commitment he has found in his family and in the people of Cedar Springs; and

WHEREAS, John Wood is perfectly fitted by birth, background, education, and life experiences to the position he now fills so ably and honorably, having grown up as one of four children in the loving, enlightened, and gently, but firmly disciplined, home of a Baptist minister in North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, as a medical corpsman in the United States Navy, John Wood served his country honorably during the Vietnam War; and

WHEREAS, as a talented and respected student, Reverend Wood studied at the University of Massachusetts and received his theological education from the Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and studied at Hebrew University; and

WHEREAS, John Wood has diligently preserved not only his own scholarly integrity, but also the integrity of the gospel, by his love for learning, which is manifested by his continual reading, by his thorough knowledge and imaginative insight into the Holy Scriptures, (particularly in emphasizing the seamless union between the Old Testament and the New) and by his familiarity with both religious and secular history, literature, and philosophy; he communicates his knowledge and insight with plainspoken, direct, and simple eloquence, never seeking to impress his audience with his erudition, yet never underestimating them by "dumbing down" his tone or message for the sake of entertainment or popular appeal; he always frankly and humbly acknowledges the presence in his subject matter of mystery, the inexplicable, and the unknowable on this side of eternity; and

WHEREAS, John Wood has diligently preserved the integrity of Cedar Springs

Presbyterian Church and the Constitution of the United States by strictly honoring the First

Amendment, permitting no hint of partisan politics to enter into the worship or social activities of the church and by endorsing no political point of view or candidate; he always prays earnestly for all the leaders of government at every level, that they might be given a passion for truth and justice and a hunger and thirst for righteousness, and thereby, help bring healing to a divided and suffering world; and

WHEREAS, John Wood has preserved the integrity of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church by instantly recognizing and rejecting every overture to lend his own good name or the good name of the church to any commercialization, saying only of the televangelists, the preachers of prosperity, and the purveyors of prophecy for profits, "I'm not comfortable around those guys"; and

WHEREAS, John Wood has preserved the integrity of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church in matters of government and discipline by carefully guiding the election, selection, appointment, or hiring of only the best, most competent and trustworthy men and women to staff, support, government and discipline positions in the church. He trusts them to perform their duties well, with no interference from him, providing them with encouragement and support, counsel, and gentle correction when asked for or the need arises and always with unflagging good will. As a result, Cedar Springs has a superb staff, with each member seeming to be perfectly fitted by talent, training, and calling to his or her position; and

WHEREAS, John Wood has preserved the integrity of his family by zealously guarding their privacy, rarely mentioning them publicly, and never holding them forth either as role models, object lessons, or as figures in cloyingly intimate domestic dramas recounted to illustrate moral preachments, although his love for his family and pride in them shine, evident and unmistakable, in his countenance; and

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WHEREAS, John Wood, having won the admiration and respect of both the secular and the religious community of Knoxville through his humanity, his intellect, his principled conduct, and his winsome personality, has infused a new spirit of understanding and brotherhood into the area, which new spirit has resulted in markedly dramatic, concrete advances in understanding, reconciliation, commonality, and brotherhood; and

WHEREAS, an articulate and eloquent communicator, John Wood has spread the gospel as a speaker for the World Vision Pastors' Conferences in Eastern and Western Europe, India and Africa and as a frequent conference speaker for other churches and mission organizations, in addition to rendering superb service as a preacher for the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America; and

WHEREAS, John Wood has lent his many talents to a number of estimable organizations, including the Covenant Theological Seminary's Board of Trustees, the Reformed Theological Seminary's Board of Ministerial Advisors, Wheaton College's Board of Visitors, the North American Council of World Evangelical Fellowship, and the National Association of Evangelicals' Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS, his open heart, indomitable spirit and stalwart ethics have endeared the Reverend John Wood to the hearts of the members of Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church over the past ten years; and

WHEREAS, devoted servants such as John Wood are the rock-solid foundation upon which our society is built and a beacon of sanity, probity, and continuity in days such as these; and

WHEREAS, John M. Wood is an outstanding example of an individual committed to God and the highest ideals of service and should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL
ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
CONCURRING, That we hereby honor and congratulate Reverend John M. Wood for his ten

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years of meritorious service to the Cedar Springs Presbyterian Church and wish him all the best in his future endeavors in the Lord's work.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

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